

THE CHARM OF
MILLAIS





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The Charm of Millais

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Ophelia

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1853. This is a real casket of pigment jewels: no setting can be imagined more fragrant and delightful. Every sense seems charmed by the sweet poetry and delicate pathos of "The Divine Ophelia"—so called by Sir W. B. Richmond. This marvellous masterpiece, with its companion "The Huguenot," made Millais's name famous and settled his place in British Art. Hamlet's unhappy love appealed to him as he read his Shakespeare and pondered in that flower-decked meadow at Ewell. How he painted the floating heroine nevertheless was ludicrous. The model was Mary Siddal, and her experiences were weird. Millais required her to lie in a large bath under which he placed many oil lamps. One day they all became extinguished and the poor girl lay benumbed in the water. She caught a violent cold and her father sued Millais for £50 damages! Note the rhythm of movement and the exquisite delicacy of the bubbles and the coloured shadows in the flowing stream. "Ophelia" is at the National Gallery of British Art.



**THE CHARM
OF
MILLAIS**

By JAMES HARLAW

C.W.

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The Charm of Millais

I. THE MAN

MILLAIS once said to Holman Hunt—who *The Man*. had called by invitation at his house in Gower Street to view what Millais was doing with respect to the fresco-cartoon competition for the Palace of Westminster—"Look at my father, I want to be just like him, or rather more so!" They were both mere striplings then—Hunt seventeen and Millais fifteen—and were, although very dissimilar in temperament and tastes, fast becoming true friends, and brothers in art at the Royal Academy schools.

Physically this aim of young Millais was actually attained. He became his father's son—his father's second self—in appearance, in disposition, and in manliness; he became,

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The Man. —as he had said, “even more so”—his father’s superior in mental culture, artistic pre-eminence, and social distinction. In the making John Everett Millais became also a typical Englishman—a patriot, a gentleman, and a benefactor to his race. His place is high in the roll of distinguished Britons—a hero of vigorous personality, sturdy self-confidence, manly courtesy, and unbudging tenacity of purpose.

At fifteen, indeed, the future President of the Royal Academy was short for his age and frail looking like his mother, but possessed of a spirit of indomitable pluck and “perfect independence of character.” In and out of mischief, like most healthy boys, he was a prince of practical jokers, and carried off his sallies with the utmost good humour so that his victims seemed to enjoy his rollicking eugenics. This buoyancy of spirits stood Millais in good stead all through his strenuous career. He grew into the figure of perfect manhood with mental and physical attributes

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of the best. Robust to the degree of *The Man*. championship his gait was linked with frankness, geniality, and urbanity. His thorough wholesomeness of life and entire lack of affectation gained him hosts of lovers. Women said he had the face of an angel; his fine features, noble head and curly brown hair appealed to them. Conceit he had none, but he stood up manfully in praise of his ideals and in defence of his friends and their aspirations. His common sense was mated with love of accuracy.

Mrs Perugini, Charles Dickens's daughter, wrote thus of Millais—and few had better opportunities of judging him—"He was a master of making himself understood; he knew perfectly what it was right to say, and said it plainly without hesitation." This characteristic is made evident to any one who stands by one of Millais's canvases and meditates thereupon. "His," she goes on to say, "was a charming personality, bringing sunshine, like his pictures, into every heart

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The Man. and home. If he had a weakness it was the love of being always right, and he was so usually." Once, the story goes, he met a man he thought he knew in Piccadilly. "Glad to see you, Mr Brown——" "My name is not Brown, Sir," the man replied, and passed on with a frown. At Bond Street corner Millais remarked to his friend, "I believe it was Brown after all!"

Millais's fine figure and bearing and his cheery voice and manner were valuable assets in the life of the Academy, in his home, and in his social circle. He always inspired confidence in others, and disarmed prejudice. He had a kind word or a friendly tap on the shoulder for everyone. He was an ideal sportsman, he never boasted of success, never spurned the unfortunate. His own faults were transparent, he never screened himself, and he had not a particle of deceit. His handshake was like an electric shock; he held his man mind and body. In middle age Millais was a model

The Order of Release

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1853. This is one of the five best compositions of Millais; it was painted along with "The Proscribed Royalist," and forms one of the most striking chapters in the master's pictorial "Story of Unselfish Love." As to who was the model for the faithful wife is not quite certain; some said Mrs Ruskin—a bride that year—but Millais never denied the features of his own fiancée, Miss Gray of Bowerswell, near Perth. The picture signalised Millais's election as an Associate of the Royal Academy, and he set much store by it in consequence. In each step from conception to finish he took extraordinary pains; some years later he retouched many parts so that it might retain its brilliancy for ever. In 1855 "The Order of Release" was exhibited, along with "Ophelia" and "Return of the Dove to the Ark," at the Palais de l'Avenue Montaigne in Paris and greatly astonished the Parisians. Such gorgeous yet earnest realism was unknown in France. This superb story picture is now at the National Gallery of British Art.



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of a man—a Hercules—the living exponent *The Man.* of his own saying, “No painter can draw who is not well proportioned, a man does but reproduce himself.” His voice was strong and musical, he spoke in a deep round tone slowly and most distinctly. As years closed in no stoop marked those broad shoulders, and his bonnie brown curls were only thinned a little and only faintly streaked with grey. He retained to the last his keenness of sight and mind. If Millais had a specially tender spot in his great loving heart, it was that of love for women and children. Henley and her summer girls were among his greatest attractions : no pretty face passed him in the street without recognition. This very happy trait stands out conspicuously in his painting : Millais’s men-folk are strong and aggressive, his women are gentle and lovable—he painted many more girls than men—and his children are fairies.

A very amusing story is told of Millais when he was busy one day working at the

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The Man. portrait of Mr Gladstone, with the great statesman seated in his studio. As usual many models called, and, among them, one who introduced herself as "the most beautiful woman in London." Gladstone laughingly called out, "By all means let us have a look at her." The lady advanced, threw aside her thick veil—"A Venus with the face of a battered tomato," was Millais's exclamation, after showing the woman out! Another of Millais's models, his friend and comrade, F. G. Stephens, tells many quaint tales of doings here and there. When, for example, both painter and sitter were cramped and wearied, bodily exercises were *de rigueur*. First Millais replenished the inner man—his own and his model's—and then he would make the man hold his arm straight out and, with no more of a run than the studio allowed, easily cleared it at a bound. Wrestling and boxing also were in the day's order, but none got the better of the master, and some got ugly tumbles and heavy crunches to boot!

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Millais was always something of an enigma *The Man.* to his friend John Ruskin. Physical culture was not a personal characteristic of that great art-critic, he doubted whether it was of the essence of true art, and yet he called to mind the vigorous life-story of Cimabue and Giotto, and he smiled on his "English Hercules," as he styled his boon-companion. He reflected that the Gods were heroes and the heroes Gods.

Millais's nick-name, in the Schools and after, was "The Lamp-post"—as quaint as it was happy! Erect in body and inflexible in will, his light shone forth resplendently to cheer on the faint-hearted, as well as to illuminate his own straight path through life.

II. HIS LIFE

His Life. MILLAIS Village and Les Monts Millais, in the jewel island of the channel, Jersey, still indicate the cradle and the nursery of the Norman-Breton family of Millais. The earliest recorded scion of the worthy race, Geoffrey Millais, was doing yeoman service and paying taxes in the parish of St Clement in the year 1313. Five hundred years rolled past, and then John William Millais was holding a commission in the Island Militia, and joining, in 1825, his hand to that of Emily Mary Evamy-Hodgkinson at St Heliers' parish church. John Everett Millais, the third child of that happy union, was born on June 8th, 1829. His parents' home was at La Quai-maison, in the picturesque capital of the island, where a sister, Emily Mary, and a brother, William Henry, also came to rejoice their parents' hearts. Mr Millais was well-to-do,

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a landowner and a man influential in insular *His Life* activities. John Everett's mother was a widow when she married, and she brought into the Millais household two young children. Henry and Clement Hodgkinson. In the spring of the year of John Everett Millais's birth, Mr and Mrs Millais paid a lengthy visit to Southampton; they took up their abode at 9 Portland Place, and there their youngest child was born.

Mr Millais was a man of fine presence, and was possessed of considerable talent as an artist and musician, but he had no ambition beyond the serenity of his home. He had the fame of a typical island troubadour and delighted everybody by his good looks and charming manners. Mrs Millais was slight of figure and a quiet unpretending woman, devoted to her husband and her children. She was the first to detect her youngest son's instinct for drawing and laid herself out to encourage his genius. He in turn held his mother in great veneration; he was accustomed

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His Life. to say, “you know I owe all to my mother.” In 1835 the family went to live for a time at Dinan in Brittany and there John Everett began seriously to scribble up and down and to sketch the things and the people around him. He hated school and lessons and more than once ran away only to be captured and beaten for his misdemeanour.

The year 1837 found the Millaises once more at St Heliers, where John Everett spent almost all his time at Roselle, a beautiful estate near the town. The Lord of the Manor took an immense fancy to the lad and permitted him to draw and paint park scenery and cattle. With the Squire’s advice and assistance the Millaises took their boy to London to interview the President of the Royal Academy—Sir Martin Archer Spee—with a view to his patronage. Sir Martin’s reply was unfavourable—“Better make your boy a sweep than an artist!” “This damped the ardour of Mr Millais, but he invited the President to look over some of John Everett’s

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drawings. He at once declared his astonish- *His Life.*
ment at the excellence of these early efforts,
and his opinion was made emphatic when
the lad, upon the spot, drew, at Sir Martin's
direction, "The Fight between Hector and
Achilles." Turning to Mr and Mrs Millais he
said, "Nature has quite evidently provided
for the boy's success!" This settled the
matter, and, acting upon the President's
advice, the youthful artist was entered as a
pupil in the art school of Henry Sass, a capable
portrait painter and a prominent teacher. The
school was situated in Bloomsbury and young
Millais speedily found his way to the galleries
of the British Museum. The Millaises now
moved to London and took possession of a
house, 88 Gower Street, where Mr Millais
gave up a back bedroom as a studio
for his young son, and there his mother
did crochet work and read aloud whilst
her boy worked away with his pencil and
brush.

Very soon John Everett gave a striking

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proof of his precocious talent ; he gained the Silver Medal of the Society of Arts for a drawing from the antique. When called up to receive his prize as “Mr Millais,” the whole assembly was convulsed with laughter, for “Johnnie” appeared in his usual little boy’s dress with a full stiff white frill round his neck and his bonny brown hair in long curls—he was but nine years old. His admission to the Royal Academy Schools was a matter of course, where he was immediately dubbed “The Child,” a soubriquet which stuck to him through life. Genius or no, the little fellow had to fag like other juniors, “I had,” related Millais, years afterwards, “to collect forty or fifty pence from my companions and go to a neighbouring tuck-shop, my commission was usually a free bun with a kick !”

Millais remained six years a pupil in the Royal Academy Schools where he won every available prize, including the Gold Medal in 1847 for a set subject, “The Tribe of

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Benjamin seizing the daughters of Shilon," in *His Life*. oils. What time he spared from pencil and brush he devoted to games. There was a small tennis-court near his father's house, and cricket was a daily diversion in his street. Every Saturday saw him at "Lord's" noting the play and filling his sketch-book. Fishing was a fascinating sport, and hours were passed worming for small fry in the New River. The year before his Silver Medal young Millais exhibited for the first time at the Royal Academy; his composition was ambitious — "Pizarro seizing the Inca of Peru" — now at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The year 1848 was quite as much an epoch in the history of British painting, as was 1830 in France: it saw the rise of a new school of painters. Three young students, each serious and enthusiastic, entered a protest against the inane canons of artistic convention; their names may well be written in the gold and vermillion which they loved—William Holman Hunt,

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His Life. John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Three startling canvases were hung at the Royal Academy—Millais's being "Lorenzo and Isabella" a pictorial rendering of Keats's paraphrase of Boccaccio. This was the first demonstration of the mysterious "P.R.B.," the sign manual of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and the first exposition of pure naturalism, as taught by the school of Cimabue and Giotto, by a British artist. The big wigs of the London art world went mad, their bigoted opposition stirred Millais to the fighting point, and he followed up his attack by two compositions still more daring and provocative, "Ferdinand lured by Ariel" and "Christ in the Home of His Parents." The former gained an offer of £100 in the studio, but the purchaser withdrew in face of the storm which raged round the finished picture. Charles Dickens voiced the ebullition when he called the latter canvas "odious, revolting and repulsive." Its simple symbolism

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and its quaintness were the knell of historical *His Life*. bombast.

Millais waved the flag of revolt still more lustily in 1851, when "The Woodman's Daughter," "Mariana in the Moated Grange," and "The Return of the Dove to the Ark," caused an epidemic of frenzy. Appeals were lodged with the authorities to remove all the three canvases from the walls of the gallery! Millais smiled for he had not finished with his traducers. Two resplendent compositions appeared in 1853, "Ophelia" and "The Huguenot," glorious in drawing, colour and finish, and the tide began to turn. Among his friends, now an ever increasing body, were the Lemprières, who lived in a picturesque house on the Ewell hard by Kingston. They told him of a sequestered cottage which would just suit him for summer rest and reflection. With his brother William and Charles Collins he began that open air picnic-sort of life which so appeals to young British manhood. Holman Hunt

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His Life. joined them to paint the background of his famous "Light of the World"; and among welcome visitors was Henry Lewis, the whole-hearted curate of the parish. There was "Ophelia" painted. Rossetti and others were of the party. In and out of the water, athletic sports on land, visits to country gentry, and flirtations with country damsels, joined with regular church attendances on Sundays, formed the wholesome curriculum—the British idea of the artist's Bohemia. "The Huguenot" had for model, a very lovely but a very flighty girl, Eleanor Mary Ryan. Romance naturally wove her name with Millais's, but she married beneath her station, the ostler of the Ewell inn, and her end was as sad and sordid as could be. Two pictures followed, among others, which taught the painter's story of unselfish love, "The Prescribed Royalist" and the "Order of Release." In a very real sense they, with their immediate predecessors, expressed Millais's love of women.

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He used to say, "Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Veronese's women are magnificent, but who would care to kiss them!" *His Life.*

No greater friends had Millais than Mr and Mrs Coombe; he was superintendent of the Clarendon Press at Oxford, with cultured tastes shared by his wife. They first met the young artist when he was at Oxford in 1848, painting the portraits of Mr Wyatt and his daughter. Mr Coombe was attracted by the skilful work he witnessed and took Millais under his wing. Endless letters passed between the friends, all of surpassing interest. Ruskin's impassioned advocacy of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood led to his no less hearty devotion to the man of them he styled "the cleverest" — John Everett Millais. He rented a cottage at Glenfinlas, where he entertained his protégé and others of like ilk. There his portrait was painted by Millais in 1853, one of the most striking examples of characterisation in Great Britain.

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His Life. Millais submitted his ideas to Ruskin and suffered his direction and correction. Writing later of those halcyon days the great critic says, "I have stopped all this time to keep Millais company, and to keep him up to the Pre-Raphaelite degree of finish, which I have done with a vengeance, and which has taken three months to do half a background." Millais was a little piqued at Ruskin's sarcasm: "I think," he said, "Ruskin has an eye only fit to judge the portraits of insects!"

Millais's love of sport and exercise—he fully knew the anatomies of horses and men—found vent in strenuous support of the great volunteer movement and in a passion for hunting. His mentor in the saddle was John Leech, the cartoonist, and his fellow Nimrods were Thackeray, Wilkie Collins and Anthony Trollope. Leech made excellent "copy" out of his friend's escapades in his droll "Adventures of Mr Tom Noddy," whilst Millais piled

The Vale of Rest

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1859. Here we are face to face with one of the most remarkable pictures of the British School, which Millais regarded as the best thing he had done. Never had he shown such depth of feeling and solemnity. This canvas was a crucial stage in the development of Millais's Art: it is, we may say, the strongest link between Millais's romantic and Millais's realistic, and quite the most decorative in all his work. It was, however, hailed by a storm of invective, and even Ruskin, the painter's truest friend, stigmatised it as "a fierce and rigid orchard with two dissimilar actors in the foreground!" The two nuns are Millais's Art personified—the passivity of the one proclaims the tenseness of romance, the activity of the other the tension of realism. The wonderful depth of colour adds immensely to the seriousness of the symbolism—an idyll of death. No need to ask who were the models when you and me are meant! This notable canvas hangs in the National Gallery of British Art.



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coals of fire on the lampoonist's head by *His Life*. introducing him to the gentle art of angling; they figured together in *Punch* for many a day as "Mr Briggs and his friend."

Millais's friendship too with Leighton was a lifelong joy to both. When the latter brought home from Rome his great decorative masterpiece, "The Cimabue Madonna," Millais was the first to welcome him in spite of Thackeray's quaint prophecy about the Presidency of the Royal Academy which announced a rival. The two had very much in common, yet, they saw men and things, and art, from very different points of view. They were at one, at all events, in their patriotism. Frequently they appeared walking arm-in-arm, but Millais, still full of boyish mischief, could not for the life of him, many a time, resist the temptation of ruffling Leighton's love-locks of which he was so immensely proud. Leighton did not like it! The same year

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saw John Everett Millais most happily married to Euphemia Chalmers, the eldest daughter of Mr George Gray of Bowerswell, near Perth—the honeymoon was spent in Scotland, where the charms of loch and moor cast their spell over the ardent lover of nature. Of course he knew his “Scott” right well and “Ivanhoe” in particular. Scottish girls, with their fine figures, their ruddy complexions, their golden hair, the merry twinkle of their eyes, and the quaintness of their speech, became goddesses in Millais’s Temple of Imagination. Great was his joy when his dear children came one after another with a blend of Scottish comeliness to enhance the perfections of their parentage.

Millais was elected A.R.A. in 1853, and R.A. in 1863, and the decade saw him at his best as man and artist. The fulness of his stature and the zenith of his art were affirmed together. After his picture, “Sir Isumbas at the Ford,” came a new period in his life and

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painting. In 1864-5 Millais paid his first *His Life*. extended visit to the continent, in the jovial company of Sir William and Lady Vernon Harcourt. Through Holland, France, and Italy, skies, landscapes, and peoples all impressed the painter. No city delighted him more than Genoa with Van Dyck's beauties in every palace. At Villa Spence, in Florence, he met Patti, Grisi and Mario, and he danced whole nights with the divine Angelina. Returning to England, he danced and romped with his own dear children, and with all the other children of his neighbourhood, and incidentally he painted them all as no British child-lover had done. Reynolds's suite hung their heads and turned brown!

Millais's continental tour freshened him up amazingly, and nothing would do but he must take his wife and children with him into Scotland year after year. Clothed in what we now call Harris-tweed or some such rain-resisting material, with great, thick-ribbed

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His Life. stockings and a real Tam-o'-Shanter on his head, his sturdy legs waded salmon streams, stormed grouse moors, and broke through the bracken of the deer forests in quest of game. He dragged his sons with him—indeed it was a rough-and-tumble-life, but the very thing for him and them. This bold, free life affected his art phenomenally. “The Enemy sowing Tares,” “Souvenir of Velasquez,” and “Chill October”—a bit of pure landscape—marked a new manner and a firmer hand. Then there opened a gallery of portraits—all of people famed for mighty thoughts and doughty deeds. Millais worked with all the vigour of a Scottish autumn storm, and honours were showered upon him from many lands. Between 1871-1886 his easel bore the weight of no fewer than one hundred and fifty-three painted glories. These told the history of his life, and showed how his nature had shaped itself, ever hopeful, ever brilliant, ever youthful and joyous. When Millais, it was said, knocked at the

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door, depression and gloom flew out of the *His Life*. window!

“Bubbles,” painted in 1885 for the proprietor of the *London Illustrated News*, with his little grandson, William James for model, was the cause of a most amusing passage-of-arms between Millais and Marie Corelli. Sir W. Ingram sold “Bubbles” to Pear’s Soap, Limited, who turned it into an attractive advertisement, much to Millais’s disgust. The lady, writing her “Sorrows of Satan,” asked him: “Why do you degrade your art by painting advertisements?” Millais responded with a three-cornered note: “What, in the name of your ‘Satan,’ do you mean by saying what is not true?” The same year brought the artist the honour of a baronetcy, and his Genoese palazzo, at Palace-Gate, became the scene of rare hospitalities and artistic delights. The Millaises had moved there from Cromwell Place in 1878. Three Queens honoured the handsome painter with their patronage and

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His Life. friendship—our own good Queen Victoria, and the Queen-Mothers of Spain and Holland.

The crowning honour of Millais's life came to him in 1896, when he was elected President of the Royal Academy in succession to his devoted friend, Lord Leighton of Stretton. Alas, that his tenure of that distinguished office was so short! Presiding at the Annual Banquet he made a touching and eloquent speech—an epitome of his career: "I must tell you," he said, "briefly my connection with the Royal Academy. I entered the Antique School as a probationer when I was eleven years of age, then I became a student in its Life School, and I have risen stage by stage until I reached the position I now hold. I have received here a free education as an artist such as any lad may enjoy who can pass the qualifying examination, and I owe the Academy a debt of gratitude which I can never repay. . . ." Six months later the heroic, lovable figure

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of Millais was laid near Leighton's corpse in *His Life*. St Paul's Cathedral: he died, August 13th. His last finished pictures were typical of the man and prophetic of his death: "A Fore-Runner,"—himself the Baptist; and "Time the Reaper,"—the "Triumph of the Black Buffaloes."

III. HIS ART

His Art. “MILLAIS’S Art was wholly fervently British—direct, simple, and spontaneous”; this is the verdict of all true lovers of British painting. His nationality was a halo around the man: his patriotism the spirit of his life. “Made in Britain,” is written in golden letters over all his work, even when his subjects are drawn from alien sources. In whatever manner his figures are disposed they are breathing British air, and their outlook is that of Britain’s realm: his backgrounds and his landscapes are reproductions from the happy land of his birth. He expressed in line and colour what Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Keats, Tennyson, Wordsworth, and Scott sang in measure. Throughout all his strenuous work the literary element is prominent, and whether his theme is poetical or dramatic he tells his

The Boyhood of Raleigh

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1870. This is the prologue of Millais's romance of adventures, the epilogue is the "North-West Passage." It is one of the painter's five chief masterpieces. It tells, without the slightest trace of a false note, the harmonious tale of youthful enthusiasm and with the minutest insight into character. The boys were two of Millais own dear sons—Everett and George, one dark, one fair, but alike in disposition and adventure. This is a "bit" of real life, for the lads are simply devouring the fisherman's vivid stories of the sea. It is painted with all the charm and pride of a devoted father who projects great things for his offspring. The boys are living chips of the old block. The picture, which is marked by the utmost distinction in design and finish, was so precious to Millais that he experienced the very greatest reluctance in parting with it—his sons. Mr J. Reiss only secured it after the greatest perseverance. It is placed in the National Museum of British Art.



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story in the colours his public liked best. *His Art.* Everything in Millais's Art reflects his love for human nature and proclaims his devotion to his kith and kin. Everybody understands him.

In Millais's remarkable career, the development of his Art followed two phases—"the romantic" and "the realistic": the first, delineated with the utmost minuteness, the last with emphatic breadth. To the first period belong a series of painted glories, beginning with "Lorenzo and Isabella," "Ferdinand lured by Ariel," and "Christ in the Home of His Parents," and ending with "Mariana in the Moated Grange," "The Return of the Dove to the Ark," and "Sir Isumbras at the Ford."

When no more than nineteen years of age Millais was brought up sharply upon the brink of a crumbling precipice which had no more solid foundation than sentimental bombast. With his comrades of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood he beat a retreat

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from the miserable artistic conventions of the day. He went straight back to Nature, and Nature—ever a fond mother—crowned him most brilliant of his school. Millais's early work was sincere, never repulsive, it exhibits forcibly his love of taking pains and his delight in fulfilment. Always desirous of tackling technical expression he once made the following declaration: "I may honestly say I never consciously put an idle touch upon canvas."

Millais's second manner is that upon which his fame chiefly depends. Its prologue was "The Vale of Rest," and its opening stanzas marked "The Eve of St Agnes," "The Minuet," and "The Black Brunswicker." It has been said, "the best painters never painted more than four or five masterpieces; such creations need the coincidence of genius, inspiration, mood, health and environment." Millais's best are—"The Vale of Rest," "The Order of Release," "The North-West Passage," "The Boyhood of Raleigh,"

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and "Souvenir of Velasquez." No one can *His Art.* detect a false note; everything is straightforward, noble, and unaffected like the painter. Each exercises minute insight into character, and tells the tale of conscientious study and fruitful achievement. Millais has succeeded in showing convincingly the individuality of each subject.

Millais was, from the first, a skilful and rapid draughtsman. As a youth he was rarely seen without pencil and sketch-book in hand. He drew anywhere and anyhow. When he visited Oxford in 1848, and Henry Hodgson there, he covered the daily tablecloths with studies, and drew upon the wallpaper of his room! Black and white was dearer to him than colours. For twenty years of his life no artist approached him in prolific output. Magazines and newspapers were enriched by his ready hand: he considered that so many more people could be reached by cheap literature than by costly canvases. His sketches on wood generally

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His Art. are marked by sharpness of outline, simplicity of elaboration, and perfection of finish. He was equally *au fait* with pencil, pen, and ink, and ink-filled brush. *Once a Week*, *Cornhill Magazine*, *Good Words*, and other periodicals may be searched with profit for Millais's delightful illustrations. Among draughtsmen of the 'sixties Millais was easily first, indeed, his work is still the standard for artists in black and white. His technique is unoppressive, his touch light, facile, and full of vitality. His drawing bears the air of refinement. There is an entire absence of the ignoble and the trivial. His balance was exact, and he was always consistent, whatever his matter or his media. Millais's drawings and etchings will be treasures at the millennium, indeed, they are so to-day in the sordid world.

Millais was a great colourist as all his "Brethren" were. Bold, splendid, and imperial was his palette, and his brush caused his colours to blush as he transferred them

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to his canvas. Can anything be imagined *His Art.* more glorious than the red glow and red shadows in "Autumn Leaves" or richer than "Mariana's" blue sheeny velvet dress. Who ever painted summer wild flowers more brilliantly than Millais in "Ophelia," or deep orchard green more russet-like than in "The Vale of Rest." "Speak, Speak" dazzles one: the lamp shines on the girl's ornaments, and the glitter wakes the man. In his "St Agnes' Eve" are evident all the qualities of Millais's magnificence. None but a painter of the higher genius could have made his canvas sing so deliciously in harmony. Millais revelled in moonlight in paint: from silver to green and into gradations of violet, everything is weird and magical. His sense of what is, perhaps, wildly called local colour and atmosphere was true and vivid. His treatment of human hair was a specialty: brown, coarse, and plentiful, like his own, so he loved to clothe heads and shoulders of his women. Millais's

The Charm of

His Art. two typical girl models, Mary Siddal and Eleanor Ryan, had reddish hair and high complexions.

Very rarely did he attempt to paint the nude figure—not that he was by any means a prude, but one canvas at all events, “The Knight Errant,” is an eloquent vindication of his power. The captive girl is perhaps too human, but she is sweet and fresh and pure; her pose is unaffected; she, too, has Millais’s brown hair and rich carnations. It was said that this “maiden fair” was painted after six weeks of unremitting toil. Millais always worked rapidly: he held to the opinion that “the best effects are those least laboured: the quicker the work the more heart in it.”

Pages may be written in praise of Millais’s portraiture. Gladstone, Carlyle, and Salisbury in solemn mood step a cotillon with the Duchess of Westminster, Mrs Bischoffstein and Eveleen Tennant, and many other distinguished couples join the dance. Each portrait is a cliché of character and temperament.

Millais

Millais's method was just to catch some natural *His Art.* effect as simply as possible, and for his instruments he used thick brown canvas, upon which he spread a plastic mass of subtle mixture known only to himself. Into this he plunged his brush, and worked it up and down for high lights and low. For faces and hands he scraped the dry pigment with a cuttlefish or a piece of glass.

To sum up John Everett Millais—man and art—it may be affirmed that he stands in the front of those men in the history of nineteenth-century painting who are as forcible and healthy as they are many-sided. No artist has painted so well the freshness and the wholesomeness of British youth.

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